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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/734,931	12/13/2000	Naftali Merari	M3575.0000/P002	5095
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DICKSTEIN SHAPIRO MORIN & OSHINSKY LLP 2101 L STREET NW WASHINGTON, DC 20037-1526				
			EXAMINER HOTALING, JOHN M	
			ART UNIT 3713	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 05/21/2004

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/734,931

Applicant(s)

MERARI, NAFTALI

Examiner

John M Hotaling II

Art Unit

3713

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 February 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 and 15-29 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 9 and 30 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 10-14 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-9, and 15-30, drawn to playing a plurality of casino game simultaneously, classified in class 463, subclass 16.
 - II. Claims 10-14, drawn to a poker playing method, classified in class 463, subclass 13.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions I and II are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, MPEP § 808.01). In the instant case the different inventions have different modes of operation different functions and different effects.

Inventions I and II are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because the poker game of group II dose not require the particulars of the playing of a plurality of casino games as disclosed in the group I claims. The subcombination has separate utility such as a poker playing game.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

During a telephone conversation with Eric Oliver on 5/5/04 a provisional election was made without traverse to prosecute the invention of group I, claims 1-9 and 15-30. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 10-14 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention. Applicant is requested to cancel the non-elected claims in any reply to this office action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claims 1-8, and 15-29 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sines et al US Patent 6,651,985. Sines discloses in figures 52-54 and columns 52-56 that it is possible to have a base game of blackjack or poker and display a plurality of secondary images such as slot machine indicia and provide an award to the player with respect to both games. Specifically column 55 lines 30-35 discloses that all or some of the virtual cards may be enhanced by associating one or more slot symbols thereto. Column 55 lines 58-67 preferably include displaying the slot symbol or symbols. This can be done on the player displays, or upon all participant displays and other alternative manners to display the slot machine symbols can be used. With respect to the claim limitations relative to the base game please see all of Sines where a player is awarded based on solely the play of the base game. Additionally, the well known method of play and award of the base game of blackjack or poker is known. With respect to the limitation of claim 26 please see above and figures 52-54 specifically reference numbers 900, 902 and 952 where the slot images are displayed above the card hand (except 952). Sines teaches one of ordinary skill that it is possible to have a base game of blackjack or any other poker game and modify it with slot machine images for a plurality of awards to be given to the player.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 9 and 30 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but may be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Citation of Pertinent Prior Art

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. All of the following are related to playing multi level or stage games: Yoseloff '334, Chadwick et al '145, Netley '618, Weingardt '818, Piechowiak et al '982, Potter et al '003, Cannon et al '378.

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John M Hotaling II whose telephone number is 703 305 0780. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs 7:30-6.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Teresa Walberg can be reached on (703) 308-1327. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JOHN M. HOTALING, II
PRIMARY EXAMINER

May 17, 2004

